

ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

BUREAU OF AIR, PERMIT SECTION

IN THE MATTER OF:

Proposed issuance of a construction permit to Illini Bio-Energy, LLC to construct an ethanol plant at 800th Avenue, 1/2 mile north of 2300th Street in Hartsburg.

Public hearing held on Wednesday, the 15th day of November 2006, at the hour of 7:00 p.m. at 400 W. Front Street, Hartsburg, Illinois.

PATKES REPORTING SERVICE
(217) 787-9314

REPORTER: LAUREL A. PATKES, CSR #084-001340

1 IEPA BUREAU OF AIR STAFF:
2 KIM KUNTZMAN, Hearing Officer
3 CHRISTOPHER ROMAINÉ
4 Manager - Construction Unit
5 BRAD FROST
6 Community Relations Officer
7 RICHARD BRECKENRIDGE
8 Agriculture advisor
9 MINESH PATEL
10 Permit Engineer

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

1	I N D E X	
2		
3		PAGE
4	Opening statement by Hearing Officer	4
5	Presentation by Minesh Patel	9
6	Comments by Sarah Wilcox, representative of Bio-Energy	12
7	Comments by Bill Roddy, representative of ICM	15
8	PUBLIC COMMENT BY:	
9	Jeff Duckworth	18
10	Taylor Hilgendorf	20
11	Steve Hammel	21
12	Kent Kleinschmidt	22
13	Bryan Sharp	23
14	Craig Conrady	26
15	Jeff Clark	30
16	Steven Schmidt	31
17	Brent Hellman	32
18	John Kuhfuss	33
19	Rob Orr	34
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Let the
3 record show that this is a public hearing before the
4 Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in the
5 matter of a proposed issuance of a construction
6 permit to Illini Bio-Energy, LLC to construct an
7 ethanol plant to be located at 800 Avenue, 1/2 mile
8 north of 2300th Street in Hartsburg.

9 Good evening, ladies and
10 gentlemen. I'd like to welcome you to this
11 evening's hearing. My name is Kim Kuntzman. I am
12 the hearing officer for this hearing. I'll
13 introduce the other representatives of the Illinois
14 EPA at the conclusion of this statement.

15 On behalf of Director Doug
16 Scott, the Illinois EPA and myself, I wish to thank
17 you for attending and your participation at this
18 hearing.

19 I would also like to thank the
20 staff at Hartsburg High School for the use of this
21 facility.

22 This hearing is being held by
23 the Illinois EPA Bureau of Air Permit Section. The
24 purpose of this hearing is to provide an opportunity

1 for the public to understand and comment on the
2 proposed construction permit to Illini Bio-Energy,
3 LLC located in Hartsburg, Illinois.

4 I believe there were copies of
5 the agenda and registration cards as well as public
6 comment forms at the registration area.

7 I apologize if you did not
8 receive an agenda. We did run a little short as a
9 result of the large attendance this evening.

10 Any person who wishes to make
11 oral comments may do so as long as the comments are
12 relative to the issues which are addressed at the
13 hearing and they have indicated they wish to make
14 oral comments by the registration cards simply by
15 checking the box.

16 If you do not have comments to
17 make but wish to ask questions, you may ask those at
18 the end of the comments without having registered.

19 Persons making comments or
20 asking questions will initially be limited to five
21 minutes until everyone who wishes to comment or ask
22 questions has had a chance to speak.

23 If you have lengthy comments
24 to make, please submit them in writing before the

1 close of the comment period, and I will ensure that
2 they are included in the hearing record as exhibits.

3 Public comment forms are at
4 the registration table for your convenience if you
5 wish to use these. Otherwise, written comments on
6 standard 8-1/2 by 11 paper will be acceptable.

7 When submitting photographs,
8 data, plans, or other documents for the record,
9 please put your name on these for identification.

10 Because a verbatim record of
11 this hearing is being made, I would request that you
12 keep all conversation and noise levels to a minimum
13 so that the court reporter can hear and transcribe
14 these proceedings. Please turn off all cell phones
15 and pagers or turn them to silence.

16 If you are making comment or
17 asking questions, please state your name and, if
18 applicable, any governmental body, association or
19 organization that you represent for the hearing
20 record.

21 If you are representing
22 yourself only, you can state that you are an
23 interested citizen or resident of Hartsburg or other
24 city.

1 The court reporter might ask
2 you to spell or repeat what you have said if she
3 didn't hear you directly. Please don't be offended.
4 She's simply doing her job and trying to get a good
5 record at this hearing.

6 Questions asked of the speaker
7 must first be framed as a question; second, relevant
8 to the subject presented; and third, not
9 repetitious.

10 Arguing or dialogue with any
11 speaker will not be allowed. Questions must be
12 directed to myself and I will direct the speaker to
13 respond as necessary.

14 The Illinois EPA will listen
15 to all relevant comments and accept all relevant
16 documents or data as exhibits into the record.

17 If you wish to make oral
18 comments but have a time constraint, please let our
19 agency staff know at the registration table, and
20 I'll endeavor to call you as early as possible, or
21 you can give your written comments to the
22 registration staff, and we will have those included
23 as an exhibit to the hearing record.

24 A 30-minute question period

1 will be allowed after the speakers have made their
2 presentations. As hearing officer, I may limit the
3 number of questions per person until everyone has
4 had a chance to speak. This question period may be
5 extended if necessary. A further question period
6 may be allowed after all comments have been made if
7 time permits.

8 Once the hearing is adjourned
9 this evening, the hearing record will remain open
10 until December 15, 2006.

11 During this time, all relevant
12 written comments, documents or data will be accepted
13 and entered into the hearing record as exhibits.

14 Please send all written
15 comments, documents or data to the Illinois EPA,
16 Hearing Officer, Subject: Illini Bio-Energy
17 Hearing, 1021 North Grand Avenue East, Post Office
18 Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois. The zip code is
19 62794-9276. Written comments do not require
20 notarization and they must be postmarked before
21 midnight December 15, 2006.

22 Anyone who has filled out a
23 registration card this evening will receive a copy
24 of the responsiveness summary which is the agency's

1 response to public comments and the final decision.
2 This will be issued once our final decision is made.

3 If you require any further
4 information after this hearing, you can contact
5 myself at area code (217)785-8911 or Brad Frost at
6 area code (217)782-7027, and we'll be glad to help
7 you.

8 The telephone number for
9 anyone who is hearing impaired is (217)782-9143.

10 I'll now introduce the other
11 Illinois EPA staff. As I said, my name is Kim
12 Kuntzman. I'm the hearing officer. Next to me is
13 Minesh Patel and Mr. Chris Romaine, both from our
14 Bureau of Air Permit Section. At the registration
15 table, you met Mr. Brad Frost who is our community
16 relations officer and Mr. Richard Breckenridge, the
17 agricultural advisor for the Illinois EPA.

18 Now I'd like to ask Mr. Patel
19 to describe the proposed construction permit.

20 MR. PATEL: Good evening, ladies
21 and gentlemen. Welcome to this evening's hearing.

22 My name is Minesh Patel. I am
23 a permit engineer with the Bureau of Air. I will be
24 giving you a brief description of the proposed

1 ethanol plant.

2 Illini Bio-Energy, LLC has
3 requested a construction permit for a dry mill
4 ethanol plant in Hartsburg. The proposed plant
5 would produce fuel ethanol from corn and would have
6 a nominal capacity of producing 110 million gallons
7 of denatured ethanol per year. The principal
8 products produced at the ethanol plant are ethanol
9 and distiller grains.

10 The ethanol produced at the
11 plant will be used as motor vehicle fuel. The
12 distiller grains are used as animal feed. The
13 proposed plant would have facilities to receive and
14 ship products such as grains, ethanol and feed by
15 both truck and rail. Natural gas would be used as
16 the fuel to supply energy for the plant.

17 The proposed plant would use
18 appropriate equipment for effective control of
19 emissions from the various operations at the plant.

20 Filters would be used to
21 control particulate matter emissions from the
22 receiving and handling of grain and the handling of
23 dry feed.

24 A scrubber would be used to

1 control organic material emissions from the
2 fermentation operation. The organic material laden
3 water from the scrubber would be reused at the plant
4 so would not be a source of wastewater.

5 Combustion control, with
6 natural gas fired thermal oxidizers, would be used
7 to control emissions of organic material, carbon
8 monoxide and particulate matter from the steam tube
9 dryers which convert wet stillage into dry feed.
10 These oxidizers as well as the natural gas fired
11 boilers that are designed to provide the steam for
12 process and the dryers would equipped with low NOx
13 burners to minimize nitrogen oxide emissions.

14 These thermal oxidizer systems
15 would also be used to control organic material
16 emissions from the distillation operations in which
17 the water and ethanol in the beer from the
18 fermenters is separated and the ethanol is purified.

19 As a result of this emissions
20 control equipment and other required equipment and
21 control measures, the proposed plant is not
22 considered a major source of emissions.

23 The permit that the Illinois
24 EPA is proposing to issue for the plant would

1 include a variety of requirements to ensure that the
2 plant is properly constructed and operated. The
3 performance of the principal control systems would
4 have to be tested after the plant is built.

5 Illini Bio-Energy would have
6 to conduct operational monitoring and recordkeeping
7 to confirm that the plant is properly operated and
8 maintained on a continuing basis.

9 These activities would be
10 overseen by the Illinois EPA which will review the
11 various reports that the plant must submit and
12 periodically conduct on-site inspections of the
13 plant.

14 We look forward to your
15 questions and comments on this proposed permit, and
16 once again, thank you for attending.

17 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: We will
18 begin with an opening statement from the company, a
19 representative of Illini Bio-Energy.

20 MS. WILCOX: My name is Sarah
21 Wilcox. I'm vice president of project development
22 for Illini Bio-Energy.

23 I want to start with a comment
24 that contrary to comments that were made in a

1 newspaper article that has appeared in several
2 newspapers over the last couple of days, this
3 hearing does not mark the end of our quiet period
4 nor does it indicate the beginning of our equity
5 drive.

6 This project started as a
7 vision of a group of farmers and agribusiness people
8 in central Illinois in late 2001. We got together
9 to investigate potential value added projects that
10 could be brought to central Illinois to give farmers
11 and central Illinois people an opportunity to
12 revitalize the rural communities. We were looking
13 also for opportunities for farmers to invest in a
14 value added project.

15 Our goal has been to the
16 extent possible to have central Illinois residents
17 be the shareholders and owners of this project.

18 Illini Bio-Energy, LLC was
19 formed in August of 2004 to construct a dry mill
20 ethanol plant.

21 Our goal has been to put
22 together a quality team of players, people who have
23 experience in the industry and a track record for
24 constructing and designing quality, well-run

1 successful plants.

2 We have also worked to develop
3 an environmentally sound project that would be a
4 good neighbor to the local community in central
5 Illinois.

6 The project that brings us
7 together this evening uses technology that has been
8 proven reliable at numerous ethanol facilities in
9 the nation.

10 Our contractor is a reliable
11 builder who has built the majority of the dry mill
12 operations that are in operation.

13 Our experienced design/build
14 team is so confident of their abilities that our
15 plant comes with performance guarantees.

16 We plan to build a hundred
17 million gallon per year ethanol plant. Each gallon
18 of ethanol displaces the amount of foreign crude
19 that we need to import into this country and keeps
20 the dollars here at home.

21 We will create a new market
22 for and use 36 million bushels of Illinois corn each
23 year. We plan to create at least or up to 45 new
24 jobs for the community.

1 This hearing this evening is
2 to allow for public comment as it relates to our air
3 emission permit, and it's just one of the many steps
4 that we will need to go through to bring this
5 project to completion.

6 We thank you for your
7 attendance, your comments, your patience and
8 support, and we look forward to the day that we are
9 able to have an ethanol operation in Hartsburg,
10 Illinois.

11 Thank you.

12 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Thank
13 you.

14 We'll go on to our speakers
15 list, those who have signed at the registration
16 table.

17 MR. RODDY: I had a few comments.

18 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Oh, I'm
19 sorry. Please come up.

20 MR. RODDY: Hi. I'm Bill Roddy
21 with ICM. We're the technology provider, and I just
22 have a few brief comments, and I would like to, when
23 I'm done, to reserve the opportunity to speak maybe
24 later after everyone has had a chance to make

1 comments.

2 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Oh,
3 sure.

4 MR. RODDY: But just to give you a
5 little history, ICM is an engineering company that
6 specializes in ethanol plants. 80 percent of the
7 plants under construction in the USA are ICM
8 designed. About 25 percent of the fuel ethanol in
9 the marketplace today comes from our process.

10 The controls we use to be
11 environmentally friendly we believe represent the
12 best technology on the market. The dryers are
13 controlled by thermal oxidizers as the state
14 mentioned.

15 The fermenters, in this case
16 there will be seven fermenters in the beer well,
17 they're controlled by a fermentation scrubber, and
18 we believe it's the best scrubber in the business.
19 It's very, very efficient, and because of that,
20 we've been able to build plants twice the size of
21 our competitors which really results in lower
22 emissions on a per gallon basis than the smaller
23 plants. So a large plant, if you look at it from
24 that point of view, is better for the environment.

1 The plant will have even a
2 street sweeper to keep the streets clean. All of
3 the load out will be controlled by flares. In other
4 words, when you load up a truck or a rail car with
5 fuel ethanol, the vapors will be flared off or
6 burned off.

7 The storage tanks per product
8 all have internal floating roofs. In other words,
9 you see a large tank. Inside of that tank it has a
10 floating roof to keep the vapors from escaping.

11 The plant will also have a
12 leak detection and repair program where personnel
13 will go out on a regular basis with a handheld VOC
14 sniffer, and if they smell a leaking component like
15 a pump or a valve or a flange, they'll fix it.

16 As far as water discharge
17 goes, no water that comes into contact with the
18 process will be discharged. That water will go to a
19 biomethanator and be cleaned up and go back into the
20 process, and any process water that does leave the
21 plant will leave from the dryers through the thermal
22 oxidizers and up the stack.

23 We do have non-contact water
24 that's used in cooling towers, and that will be

1 discharged, and we have to meet the state standards
2 before you're allowed to discharge that.

3 But that's a few brief
4 comments I wanted to make.

5 Thank you very much.

6 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Mr. Jeff
7 Duckworth?

8 MR. DUCKWORTH: My name is Jeff
9 Duckworth, and I'm the manager at Hartsburg Grain
10 Company.

11 When I first heard about this
12 proposed plant, I was initially hesitant. I related
13 my opinion when the City of Lincoln wanted to build
14 some apartments, and they wanted to build them right
15 near the complex that I owned, and I was afraid the
16 effect it would have on my investment.

17 As time passed, though I still
18 fail to see any direct benefit, I do believe they
19 contributed to the overall growth of Lincoln more
20 than any harm they've done to me. I think long-term
21 benefits of growth are worth their presence.

22 This is a path I followed with
23 the ethanol plant. My first thought which was
24 probably the initial opinion of every elevator

1 manager in the corn belt was the prospect of another
2 corn buyer right next to me.

3 I had a pretty difficult time
4 imagining how that would benefit Hartsburg Grain,
5 but as time passed, I began to visualize ways for
6 Hartsburg Grain to profit by working with the plant
7 to provide the services they could use.

8 What followed was a plan to
9 position Hartsburg Grain for this new opportunity,
10 and the next thing you know, we're expanding our
11 assets, realizing a stronger financial statement.
12 Instead of staying in one place for growing and
13 positioning ourselves for future growth, the initial
14 problem was the prospect of an ethanol plant right
15 next door, but I think that's an important concept.

16 There always seems to be
17 skepticism any time a major change is imminent, and
18 clearly, an ethanol plant on the outskirts of
19 Hartsburg would be classified as a major change in
20 the landscape.

21 I had talked with other
22 elevator operators near ethanol plants, and they
23 have told me that these new plants have come with
24 very minimal problems in their area, and these are

1 their words, and that they are actually looked upon
2 by these people as a welcome addition.

3 I think what is often
4 overlooked because of the skepticism is the
5 opportunity a change like this presents. No one
6 knows exactly what will happen in the future if an
7 ethanol plant is constructed in our vicinity, but I
8 would be more disturbed by the missed opportunity if
9 one wasn't.

10 I think if this opportunity is
11 evaluated and acted upon, there's an excellent
12 chance for growth and prosperity in the Hartsburg
13 area.

14 Thank you.

15 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Taylor
16 Hilgendorf?

17 MR. HILGENDORF: Hello. I'm Taylor
18 Hilgendorf, and I represent the Hartsburg FFA, and I
19 would just like to say I'm for this plant because as
20 son of a local farm producer, this plant will
21 increase competition to buy locally produced corn,
22 and this will help increase corn crops in the area.
23 Most of the people in this area are farmers anyway
24 so I feel it will benefit the whole area.

1 Thank you.

2 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Steve
3 Hammel?

4 MR. STEVE HAMMEL: I'm from
5 Champaign, Illinois. I grew up in that area.

6 There's several ethanol plants
7 being built in our area, but they're all being built
8 by large big money companies. We have no chance to
9 invest in any of those companies over there.

10 I look forward to the
11 opportunity to be able to invest in Illini
12 Bio-Energy where the producer can actually sell its
13 crop and get some value added out of what he's
14 producing as opposed to just being a supplier to the
15 big money corporations, and I look forward to the
16 opportunity of being able to invest in Illini
17 Bio-Energy.

18 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Bernard
19 Hammel?

20 MR. BERNARD HAMMEL: I wish to pass
21 and let somebody else speak.

22 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: You want
23 to reserve the write to speak later?

24 MR. BERNARD HAMMEL: Yes.

1 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Okay.

2 Kent Kleinschmidt?

3 MR. KLEINSCHMIDT: Kent

4 Kleinschmidt, Emden. I'm a farmer, corn producer.

5 I was on the Corn Growers Board several years ago,

6 and one thing we worked on forever it seems like is

7 ethanol production, ethanol plants, and I'm thrilled

8 to stand here tonight, and hopefully we're going to

9 have one built down the road from me.

10 I also represent the corn

11 marketing board now, and I guess, more importantly,

12 I'm in favor of it, and I am downwind so hopefully

13 that won't be a problem. I don't think it will be

14 because the plants are very efficient and well run

15 now.

16 Thank you.

17 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Kathy

18 Kaesebier? I apologize if I mispronounced it.

19 MS. KAESEBIER: Hi. I'm Kathy

20 Kaesebier, and I live in Elkhart, Illinois which is

21 in the southern part of Logan County.

22 I've grown up on a farm all my

23 life. My husband and I produce corn and soybeans,

24 and the prospect of being able to see our corn

1 processed in a local county is exciting. I know
2 we've enjoyed watching the corn prices go up the
3 past few weeks and months just over the talk of all
4 the ethanol plants that are being talked about being
5 built in the United States.

6 I think it's a good thing for
7 our rural economy, our American economy, and I'm
8 just in support of it.

9 Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Bryan
11 Sharp?

12 MR. SHARP: I guess I'd like to
13 start with saying good evening to everyone this
14 evening. I'd like to thank the Illinois EPA for
15 this opportunity to come out and speak in support of
16 the project like the Illini Bio-Energy project here
17 at Hartsburg, and this project really truly is a
18 chance for rural communities and farmers to work
19 together and help themselves.

20 Again, my name is Bryan Sharp.
21 I'm president of the Illinois Farmers Union, but I
22 think more importantly, I'm a fourth generation
23 farmer in Christian County, and that's something I
24 want to continue to see move forward, and I think

1 projects like this can help these things to happen.

2 But I am here tonight to
3 support or express my IFU support and my personal
4 support for the project.

5 Now, this project brings
6 countless positives to the community of Hartsburg.
7 One positive that has been a foundation in our
8 policy is the survival and prosperity of rural
9 America and rural communities. This project helps
10 rural communities to achieve those goals.

11 I'd just kind of like to offer
12 a few observations that I've kind of heard in a few
13 different hearings and different things.

14 First of all, this is not a
15 wet mill plant. It is dry mill technology, and from
16 what I had noticed, the odor problems associated
17 with wet mill plants don't seem to occur with dry
18 mill plants.

19 Having toured a few different
20 dry mill plants, I would describe the odor as
21 somewhat pleasant similar to baking bread. They
22 just don't seem to emit the sharp sense of odor of
23 some of the wet mill plants.

24 The comment that I'd just like

1 to make, that this project, one of the byproducts of
2 it is DDGs, not gluten. There may be a little
3 confusion between wet mill plants producing DDGs.
4 That's not the case. Wet mill plants produce
5 gluten. Dry mills produce DDGs, and then the
6 byproducts I think of the DDGs are far superior feed
7 stock to some of the gluten byproducts.

8 And thirdly, I guess I'd just
9 like to say that I really believe that this group
10 has elected to use the best design built in the
11 industry. They are experienced which is very
12 important to the success and longevity of the
13 plants, and with their years of experience, I think
14 they will bring a very successful project to your
15 community, and I think there's a lot of pride in
16 craftsmanship that goes into these plants that is
17 apparent when touring them, and I think they do
18 maintain a very neat well kept plant, and that
19 affects the yield of the projects.

20 So I guess concluding, IFU
21 supports this project, I support this project, and
22 I'm sure that they would work well with you folks
23 and be good neighbors, and I think most importantly
24 is the investment in the plants has the opportunity

1 to come from you and me. Local investment in rural
2 communities by local folks, the dollars will have a
3 chance to remain local, not in some CEO's pocket or
4 some foreign bank account from an outside
5 investment.

6 Thank you, and I hope the
7 project goes well.

8 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Craig
9 Conrady?

10 MR. CONARDY: Hello. I'm Craig
11 Conrady. I'm a community member, a fourth
12 generation farmer, a school board member, and a seed
13 stock owner in Illini Bio-Energy.

14 As a community member, I have
15 seen Hartsburg-Emden slowly lose ground in
16 businesses; no grocery stores, no gas stations, and
17 so forth.

18 Through the use and the
19 establishment of the ethanol plant, I can perceive
20 both being part of a new growth and community. I
21 believe ethanol plants help communities to thrive.

22 As a fourth generation farmer,
23 I farm corn, beans, and cattle. Ethanol increases
24 the price of corn. It has in the noticeable past

1 month and a half with an extreme move in price just
2 because of them saying the ethanol plants were
3 coming on line and look out for the future.

4 Also, in my growing of cattle,
5 I use a byproduct of ethanol. Right now I use dry
6 corn gluten, pushing the wet corn gluten, but as the
7 ethanol plant in Hartsburg gets up and going, I will
8 switch over to distillers grain. It is a good feed
9 supplement for my cattle.

10 As a school board member, we
11 gave a tax break to Illini Bio because of the Logan
12 County enterprise zone. I missed the meeting where
13 they actually gave the break to Illini Bio-Energy,
14 but we felt as a school board, first of all, this is
15 a way to draw the ethanol plant into thinking about
16 using Hartsburg as a potential site.

17 The future tax base increase
18 by the ethanol plant is tremendous. Better than a
19 hundred million dollars is going to go into the
20 construction of this site, and a town the size of
21 Hartsburg and Emden, a hundred million dollar plus
22 investment in the community makes a heck of a tax
23 base increase for our schools and for our future.

24 It should also bring at least

1 ten new families to our community. A town the size
2 of Emden of 500 people, a town the size of Hartsburg
3 of 300 people, ten new families in that size a
4 community is a big deal. It's not that big of a
5 deal for big towns, but for a town the size of
6 Hartsburg and Emden, it is a big deal.

7 With ten families brings
8 children, and children need to be educated, kind of
9 brought back to our school district hopefully so we
10 can continue on with this school district in the
11 future.

12 Then I'm down to my seed stock
13 ownership which I did two years ago with Illini
14 Bio-Energy. I bought into the project because I
15 believe in ethanol plants. I believe in value added
16 to any of products I raise, and ethanol definitely
17 helps the corn, and since I did it, I also got
18 involved with cattle. It will help my cattle
19 operation also.

20 About two years ago, we were
21 asked if we wanted to go to visit an ethanol plant
22 before we invested our money. I went along with
23 them on a bus trip over to Burlington, Iowa to Big
24 River.

1 When I got there, I noticed a
2 few things about it right up front.

3 First of all, I noticed when
4 we pulled up in front of the facility, I was
5 surprised how small the facility was. The facility
6 didn't smell anything like the Decatur smell that
7 blows across, and we can smell it here sometimes
8 because the odor hits us. When we walked up to the
9 plant and we walked up into the main office, I could
10 not smell anything dealing with ethanol but the odor
11 of fermenting of corn.

12 I actually got my first whiff
13 of it when we actually walked in the buildings which
14 had the beer vats in them where the actual
15 fermenting process was taking place. Town life
16 there was taking place about a mile from the plant.
17 It was not just town life, it was big city life.
18 I'm talking a main highway with a Wal-Mart right
19 across the street and so on and so forth. It was a
20 big long stretch of nice businesses going just about
21 a mile, mile and a half from the front door of the
22 facility.

23 There was no smoke coming or
24 steam coming out of any of the vent pipes such as

1 what goes on through ADM.

2 The other night we went
3 through Decatur, my wife and I did, down 121, and
4 when we came across Decatur and came across ADM
5 site, there was a whole bunch of smoke stacks
6 sticking up in the air spewing out steam through the
7 nighttime, and the site over at Burlington, Iowa did
8 not have it. The site of Burlington, Iowa, Big
9 Rivers, was put up by Fagen, the same company who is
10 ready to put up the Hartsburg ethanol plant.

11 I think it is a win situation
12 for the community. It's a boon to building of the
13 ethanol plant. Farmers are happy. Everybody is
14 happy when it comes to price paid for corn.

15 With families come children
16 who go to school, and the size of the plant will
17 increase the tax base.

18 Thank you.

19 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Jeff
20 Clark?

21 MR. CLARK: Hello. I am Jeff Clark
22 representing the Hartsburg FFA Chapter.

23 As I hear about this ethanol
24 plant coming to our community, it excites me because

1 our nation is one of the wealthiest in the world,
2 and what makes this possible is fossil fuel, and we
3 all know that fossil fuel is in limited supply, and
4 ethanol is a safe alternative to fossil fuel, so I
5 believe that we need to step up production, and this
6 plant will obviously help with that.

7 Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Steve
9 Schmidt?

10 MR. SCHMIDT: Good evening. I'm
11 Steven Schmidt. I'm president of Central Illinois
12 Ag over in Atlanta. We've got four farm equipment
13 stores in central Illinois -- Pekin, Atlanta, Farmer
14 City, and Clinton.

15 When I first heard about the
16 ethanol plant coming to Lincoln, I was very happy
17 being on Lincoln Logan Chamber of Commerce Board a
18 while back. Anything that will bring jobs to Logan
19 County is a plus. Anything that will bring more
20 dollars for the corn crop to the farmers is good for
21 my business, but I also have a son-in-law who's over
22 in Iraq fighting for this country kind of protecting
23 the oil.

24 So if we can produce ethanol

1 here, process the corn locally, keep jobs, help the
2 Hartsburg-Emden area as far as growing and
3 maintaining their school district, anything that's
4 good for the central Illinois farmers is good for my
5 business and it's good for the whole economy of the
6 State of Illinois.

7 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Brent
8 Hellman?

9 MR. HELLMAN: Hi. I'm Brent
10 Hellman. I'm representing the Logan County Farm
11 Bureau. Besides that, I am a local resident and
12 farmer.

13 I just want to express the
14 optimism that the Farm Bureau has for the possible
15 economic development that this would have for the
16 Hartsburg-Emden area, let alone Logan County,
17 possibly bringing other businesses along with this
18 plant.

19 It also gives the local
20 farmers another outlet for their grain. It will be
21 an outlet that's close to home. The size of the
22 benefit to the farmers in the agricultural
23 community, hopefully, it will be an economic benefit
24 to the local communities in Hartsburg, Emden,

1 Lincoln and Pekin. It will be a benefit to everyone
2 in the area, not just Hartsburg and Emden.

3 So as a farm bureau, we're
4 really glad to see this because that's one of the
5 things we really want to try and help. We want to
6 help the local communities promote rural
7 development, and this project would be a great way
8 to bring that benefit locally.

9 Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: John
11 Kuhfuss?

12 MR. KUHFUSS: My name is John
13 Kuhfuss. I'm a farmer in Mackinaw, and I also serve
14 as president of the Illinois Corn Growers
15 Association for whom I speak tonight.

16 I have only a couple of
17 comments that I'd like to make.

18 The most important one I think
19 everybody has to keep in mind is that when this
20 plant is built and permitted to operate, it will
21 operate under the parameters set by the Illinois
22 EPA. The air quality, the long-term air quality
23 will not suffer.

24 The other thing I'd like to

1 make sure that everyone remembers is that the
2 economic benefits that a plant like this can bring
3 to the community are significant long-term benefits.
4 It brings jobs to the community. The jobs are money
5 to the community, and also, that's an opportunity
6 for the people within the community to continue to
7 stay there. They won't have to leave to find jobs
8 elsewhere.

9 This is, as several people
10 have already commented, a significant economic
11 development for the area, both the farmers and those
12 people who are not farmers and both the stockholders
13 and people who are not because it brings money in
14 and it helps everybody in the community.

15 Thank you.

16 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Rob Orr?

17 MR. ORR: Hi. My name is Rob Orr,
18 and I'm the executive director of the Lincoln Logan
19 County Development Partnership.

20 I'd like to suggest to you
21 that so far it seems unanimous so I don't know why
22 we don't go ahead and stamp the permit approved and
23 go home.

24 The economic development

1 organization representing Logan County firmly and
2 totally supports this project. You've heard about
3 the great economic opportunities that it may bring
4 to not only the Hartsburg area but also to Logan
5 County.

6 This will have obviously an
7 impact on corn producers. It will have an impact on
8 trucking companies. It will have an impact
9 obviously on the people who are hired to work at the
10 plant.

11 We urge you to approve this
12 permit expeditiously, and we look forward to getting
13 this plant up in operation and realizing those
14 benefits.

15 Thank you for coming to Logan
16 County.

17 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Mr.
18 Hammel, we're at the end of our speakers list if you
19 wish to speak.

20 MR. BERNARD HAMMEL: No, I do not
21 wish to because I think all of my interests have
22 been expressed.

23 I hope that you will go along
24 with giving the permit because I've been down to

1 Robinson or Palestine and talked to the people
2 there, and they had nothing but praise for the
3 operation.

4 HEARING OFFICER KUNTZMAN: Are
5 there any other comments that anyone would wish to
6 make?

7 Since there are no other
8 comments from the public, before the close of the
9 hearing, I would like to explain a few things just
10 for your information.

11 First, if you do wish to
12 submit further comments or questions regarding the
13 proposed permit, again, you may submit those to the
14 Illinois EPA hearing officer, Subject: Illini
15 Bio-Energy hearing. The address is 1021 North Grand
16 Avenue East, Post Office Box 19276 in Springfield,
17 Illinois 62794-9276.

18 Again, the comments should be
19 postmarked by midnight December 15, 2006, and the
20 comments do not need to be notarized.

21 Finally, on behalf of our
22 director, Mr. Doug Scott, the Bureau of Air staff
23 and myself, I wish to thank you all again for coming
24 this evening.

1 This hearing is closed. The
2 record will remain open to and including
3 December 15, 2006.

4 Thank you.

5 (Ending time: 7:50 p.m.)

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
COUNTY OF SANGAMON)

CERTIFICATE

I, Laurel A. Patkes, Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for said County and State, do hereby certify that I reported in shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of my shorthand notes so taken as aforesaid.

Dated this 22nd day of November 2006.

Certified Shorthand Reporter